



Devoted to the Mridangam

Accomplished mridangam maestro TS Nandakumar teaches young aspirants the intricacies of Indian classical music.

VIJAY SHANKAR reports

With a musical lineage that can be traced to the legendary Nadaswaram duo, Ambalappuzha Brothers, TS Nandakumar developed a passion for music when he was hardly seven years old. With arduous training under the able tutelage of reputed mridangam maestro Kaithavana Madhava Das, Nandakumar soon acquired proficiency as 'Laya Vidwan'. Since then, he has won accolades for his performances from prestigious institutions like the Kerala Sangeet Natak Academy.

For more than two decades now Nandakumar has been promoting Indian carnatic music both as a teacher and a performer. He has had the privilege of performing for various prestigious festivals all over the country, besides giving performances for All India Radio and Doordarshan.

through intelligent rhythmic forays. He is much sought after as a teacher and he guides students in the intricacies of mridangam, the south Indian percussive instrument. He is the leading light of the percussive ensemble known as the 'Vadya Laya Vrinda'. Last year, Nandakumar established TSN's Percussive Arts Centre. He states, "Though there are several institutions for imparting training in vocal and instrumental music and dance, there is no institution which imparts exclusive and specialised training in 'Avanaddha Vadyas' i.e. percussive instruments. Also the number of artistes associated with the 'Avanaddha Vadyas' is dwindling mainly because of lack of proper training facilities. With a view to bridge this gap, TSN's Percussive Arts Centre has

forerunner in the promotion of fine arts. The institution plans to explore rhythm and form ensembles of percussive artists".

Musicologist Dr Sulochana Rajendran says "There is one more dimension to this dynamic teacher which only those who have closely observed his methodology could perceive.

There is an urge in him to reach the rhythm to the kids, whatever their aptitude. He as an easy methodology, a play of pace and 'Aksharakalas' which he imparts in a way that a child with certain calculative acumen can grasp a